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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
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FAMINE REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT

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This report of the Hoover Mission was delivered to President Truman May 13, 1946. The report includes a statement from the mission with supporting tables of cereal requirements and supplies.

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Washington, D. C.  
May 13, 1946The President  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. President:

We have completed your instructions to survey the principal nations affected by food shortages which have resulted, or may result, in widespread famine; to evaluate the minimum needs of these areas until the next harvest; and to discover such additional food resources as possible. In accordance with your instructions, we have also presented the American point of view on the food problem to these nations and the interest and understanding of our people in their plight. Finally, we have constantly advised American officials and the American public as to the situation as we found it.

We have traveled some 35,000 miles, visited twenty-two countries which have a deficiency of food, and informed ourselves of the situation in several others. The only country of large reported deficiency we did not visit was the Union of South Africa. We visited five self-sufficient or surplus countries and informed ourselves of the situation in other consequential surplus nations.

The dominant need of the world in this crisis is cereals, particularly wheat and rice. There is great need of fats and special food for children, but as cereals can furnish 85 per cent of an emergency diet, we considered cereal requirements were the first concern, and the best indicator. If a foundation of bread can be assured, and as much fats and children's food as possible, mass starvation can be prevented.

At the time of our departure, the Combined Food Board's estimate of the available cereal supplies from surplus countries showed a deficit as compared with stated requirements of 11,000,000 tons, or 43 per cent.

REQUIREMENTS - We attach hereto (Table I) a country-by country, month-by-month minimum program of required cereal imports to the deficit and famine areas from May 1st to September 30th.

These programs represent a considerable reduction from the hitherto stated requirements of the various nations. The amounts have in most cases been agreed upon by their governments. In the case of China, we regret to say our program is less than minimum need but is all, or more, than can be transported inland to the famine areas. The totals are:

Europe	8,390,000 tons
Latin America	1,000,000 tons
South Africa and	
New Zealand	198,000 tons
Middle East	100,000 tons
Indian Ocean area	2,886,000 tons
Pacific Ocean area	<u>1,910,000 tons</u>
Total . . . . .	14,484,000 tons

Of course, every country would be better off if more could be furnished.

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SUPPLIES

We have found some increases in supplies possible during the crisis through development of certain new sources of supply; through additional loans of cereals from early-crop countries which may not themselves have annual surpluses; through substitution of other cereals for wheat and rice; and as a result of conservation up to this time.

Our estimate (Table II) of Probable Supplies as of May 1st to September 30th are:

From	
United States	4,220,000 tons
Canada	2,300,000 tons
Australia	992,000 tons
United Kingdom	200,000 tons
Argentina	2,375,000 tons
Brazil	200,000 tons
Other Western Hemisphere States	40,000 tons
Burma	75,000 tons
Siam	195,000 tons
Russia to France	<u>300,000 tons</u>
TOTAL . . . . .	10,897,000 tons

Therefore the gap in supplies between May 1st and September 30th can be reduced to about 3,600,000 tons, as against an 11,000,000 tons gap in the earlier appraisals.

In addition to the above supplies there is a "possible" about 1,500,000 tons more, as indicated in Table III.

We are confident that if until the end of August, there can be further vigorous conservation in surplus countries, mainly wheats and fats, and more energetic cooperation between nations, the remaining deficit can be largely overcome. The cooperation of Russia and the Latin American States would greatly aid in meeting the problem. If mass starvation is to be prevented it will require constant effort.

It is of interest to note that the quantities which are provided by UNRRA as charity comprise about 20 per cent of the world's cereal needs, whereas nations representing 80 percent are being financed by the importing countries themselves. But the need in these latter is no less urgent.

You will recognize that these statements are estimates. They, however, comprise a reasonable basis upon which to formulate policies.

We wish to express our especial appreciation of the unfailing aid and courtesy of the Secretaries of Agriculture, State and War, and the American officials abroad. We are also deeply indebted to Generals George and Saville of the Air Transport Command, their efficient crews, and for their provisions for our comfort and safety.

Yours faithfully,

HERBERT HOOVER	W. HALLAM TUCK
D. A. FITZGERALD	PERRIN C. GALPIN
HUGH GIBSON	MAURICE PATE

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TABLE I

CEREAL REQUIREMENTS (including Rice)

EUROPE

\* Visited by the Mission

MINIMUM ARRIVALS REQUIRED DURING CRISIS PERIOD

(Loadings at seaboard about 30 days earlier)

Based on not to exceed 300 grams cereals per person per day

Country	Population Millions	(Thousands of Tons)					Total
		May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	
* France	39.1	350	350	350	350	350	1,750
* No. Africa	12.0	100	-	-	-	-	100
* Italy	41.5	225	225	225	100	-	775
* Switzerland	4.2	-	-	30	30	30	90
* Czechoslovakia	13.5	60	60	60	60	50	290
* Poland	23.5	85	85	85	85	-	340
* Finland	3.8	-	-	25	40	40	105
* Norway	3.0	-	-	-	30	30	60
* United Kingdom	47.5	400	400	400	400	400	2,000
* Belgium	8.0	60	60	60	60	60	300
* Holland	9.0	-	-	-	-	80	80
* Germany:							
Am. Zone	18.0	50	50	50	65	60	275
Br. Zone	23.3	180	180	180	180	180	900
Fr. Zone	6.0	30	45	45	45	30	195
Russ. Zone		Data unknown					
* Austria	7.0	30	55	55	55	30	225
Spain	26.0	60	60	60	60	-	240
Portugal	8.0	30	30	30	30	-	120
Albania	1.0	5	5	5	5	-	20
* Yugoslavia	16.0	50	50	50	50	50	250
* Greece	7.5	55	55	55	55	55	275
EUROPE TOTALS	317.9	1,770	1,710	1,765	1,700	1,445	8,390

LATIN AMERICA

Latin-America	200	200	200	200	200	1,000
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NEW ZEALAND AND SOUTH AFRICA

New Zealand	-	9	9	0	0	18
South Africa	40	40	40	30	30	180
	40	49	49	30	30	198

NEAR EAST

Near East	20	20	20	20	20	100
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TABLE I - continued  
\* Visited by the Mission

INDIAN OCEAN

(Loadings from Eastern Hemisphere 1 month and Western Hemisphere 2 months earlier)

Country or Province	Population Millions	(Thousands of Tons)					Total
		May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	
* INDIA (Provinces affected)							
Bombay	22.0	-	55	85	95	95	330
Mysore	7.6	14	25	25	25	25	114
Madras	51.4	210	170	170	170	170	890
Tranv.	6.5	18	10	10	10	10	58
Cochin	1.5	8	7	7	7	7	36
Deccan	2.9	43	19	19	19	19	119
Behar	37.9	19	14	20	20	20	93
Un. Provinces	57.6	24	-	-	60	60	144
Bengal	61.3	-	-	90	106	106	302
Other		50	50	50	50	50	250
Ceylon	7.0	60	60	60	60	60	300
Malaya & Straits Settlements	3.6	50	50	50	50	50	250
TOTAL		496	460	586	672	672	2,886

PACIFIC OCEAN

* Philippines	14.0	12	12	12	12	12	60
* China <u>1/</u>	220.0	120	150	200	200	200	870
* Japan	75.0	50	250	270	200	100	870
* Korea <u>2/</u>	14.0	15	30	45	10	10	110
		197	442	527	422	322	1,910

GRAND TOTAL 2,723 2,881 3,147 3,044 2,689 14,484

SURPLUS OR SELF-SUFFICIENT COUNTRIES

* Sweden	6.2	-	-	-	-	-	-
* Denmark	3.8	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hungary	9.1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rumania	12.1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bulgaria	6.5	-	-	-	-	-	-
* Egypt	17.3	-	-	-	-	-	-
* Iraq	4.0	-	-	-	-	-	-
* Siam	14.0	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	73.0	-	-	-	-	-	-

1/ Utmost capacity of inland trans.

2/ American Zone

(more)



TABLE II

POSSIBLE WORLD CEREAL SUPPLIES FROM SURPLUS AREAS (May 1 to Sept. 30)

	Second Quarter Loadings (April, May, June)			Loadings in July and August			Total
	(000 tons)						
	Wheat	Coarse grains	Rice	Wheat	Coarse grains	Rice	
U.S.A.	2,200	500	20	1,400	100	-	4,220
Canada	1,650	150	-	400	100	-	2,300
Australia	700	-	17	275	-	-	992
United Kingdom	200	-	-	-	-	-	200
Argentina	500	800	-	275	800	-	2,375
Brazil	-	50	60	-	50	40	200
Other Western Hemisphere States	-	-	40	-	-	-	40
Burma	-	-	40	-	-	35	75
Siam	-	-	75	-	-	120	195
Russia to France	150	-	-	150	-	-	300
	<u>5,400</u>	<u>1,500</u>	<u>252</u>	<u>2,500</u>	<u>1,050</u>	<u>195</u>	<u>10,897</u>
GRAND TOTAL: (Wheat - 7,900; Coarse grains - 2,550; Rice - 447)							10,897

TABLE III

FURTHER SUPPLIES POSSIBLE

	Second quarter loadings (April-May-June)			Loadings in July and August				
	(000 tons)							
	Wheat	Coarse grains	Rice	Wheat	Coarse grains	Rice	Total	Remarks
Indo-China	-	-	50	-	-	50	50	
Iraq	-	125	-	-	100	-	225	
India	-	-	-	-	200	-	200	Surplus Provinces
Punjab and Sind	100	-	-	100	-	-	200	Could be borrowed
Egypt	30	-	10	50	-	25	115	Could be borrowed
United Kingdom	300	-	-	-	-	-	300	Released stocks
Russia to France	75	-	-	-	-	-	75	
Siam	-	-	-	-	-	200	200	
	505	125	60	150	300	225	1,365	
Iraq (dates)							140	
							<u>1,505</u>	

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TABLE IV

PROVISIONAL BALANCE SHEET OF WORLD REQUIREMENTS AND SUPPLIES  
(000 tons)

MINIMUM CEREAL REQUIREMENTS

Europe	8,390	
Latin-America	1,000	
Southern British Empire	198	
Middle East	100	
Indian Ocean	2,886	
Pacific Ocean	1,910	
		14,484

CEREAL SUPPLIES PROBABLE

April-May-June Loadings	7,202	
July-August Loadings	3,695	
		10,897
DEFICIT PROBABLE	3,587 tons or 24 percent	
Further possible cereal supplies	1,505	

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TABLE V

COMPARISON OF THE COMBINED FOOD BOARD BALANCE  
SHEET OF MARCH 1, 1946 (retrospective to Jan-  
uary 1, 1946) AND HOOVER MISSION BALANCE SHEET  
AS OF MAY 1st, 1946  
(000 tons)

	Stated Requirements	Estimated Supplies	Deficit	Deficit p.c.
<u>Combined Food Board</u>				
Jan. 1 - Sept. 1	25,900	14,900	11,000	42.5%
Shipments to May 1	7,000	7,000		
Original Balance as at May 1	18,900	7,900	11,000	58%
As Revised by Hoover Mission:				
May 1 - Sept. 1	14,484	10,900	3,587	24%
	- 4,000	+ 3,000	- 7,413	

Thus, the requirements were revised downward by 4,000,000 tons  
and the Supplies revised upward, through new  
sources developed, effect of conservation,  
drafts on earlier crops in some countries, etc., 3,000,000 tons

The estimated gap as of May 1st 3,600,000 tons

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